MAN'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CREATOR

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Rendered into English by
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In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful!

PREFACE

In today's world Islam is the only religion which presents the pristine concept of Monotheism (Oneness of God) and describes very clearly the defects of polytheism and the deprivation caused by it. Associating others with Allah; in His being, His attributes, His rights and His authority is polytheism. This polytheism is more dangerous than denial of Allah. The Holy Quran presents the belief of monotheism also tells us about the practical demands that this belief makes in the practical life of man. The Holy Quran says that it becomes incumbent upon the person who believes Allah (to be One), to fulfil in his life the demands that this belief makes. Otherwise believing in Allah to be One becomes irrelevant.

The Holy Quran has authoritatively explained the meaning of believing in Oneness of Allah and the practical demands that it makes.

1. Allah is not only the Creator of man, the Universe and this world, but also their Master, the Cherisher, the Sustainer and the Ruler.

2. Allah has no family, no son, no daughter or wife. He has always been in existence and would always remain in existence.

3. The Attributes of Allah like *Razique* (the Provider of livelihood), *`Aadil* (the Dispenser of justice), *`Aalim* (having knowledge of everything), *Samî* (the All-Hearing), *Baseer* (the All-Seeing), etc. are not the separate forms of His Entity that they be worshipped as such; rather they are all only the Attributes of One Allah.

4. He alone guides the entire universe and particularly guides man and formulates laws for him. For every creature of His, He has formulated particular principles, laws and regulations. Man is a very unique creation of Allah. Therefore, for man's guidance Allah has created a great system called the chain of Divine Messengers. The first Messenger of Allah on this earth was the first man,

Hazrat Adam (peace be upon him), and the last Messenger is Hazrat Muhammad (peace be upon him). Nearly 124,000 Messengers have been sent to different parts of the world in different times and in different languages. These Messengers brought the Guidance from Allah and followed it completely in their lives. Therefore, belief in all the Messengers and particularly the last Messenger, Hazrat Muhammad, is an integral part of belief in Allah.

5. Similarly, the belief in Allah also implies that we believe Him to be unbegotten; that none has seen Him with his eyes, nor can anyone see Him in this world and that the form or picture that is made of Him (by some misguided people) in this world is far away from the truth.

6. Belief in Oneness of God also means that we should believe in all the commands and instructions of Allah sent through his last Messenger, Hazrat Muhammad, and act accordingly. The dos and don'ts ordained by Allah are now available only in the Quran and the Life of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

Before the revelation of the Quran, other books had been revealed by Allah for the guidance of the people of their respective periods. Though we have to believed in the previous sacred books, but have to know that now only Quran can guide us. If any person believes in earlier books but does not believe in the Quran, then he is not considered a believer, even of the previous books. The basis on which the earlier books are Divine Books, on that very basis the Quran should also be believed to be a Divine Book. With the passage of time the previous Divine Books have been corrupted and hence they have not remained secure; only the Quran has remained safe from any changes and corruption.

In the Quran, evidences and proofs have been presented about monotheism for the rumination of man. Freedom of acceptance and rejection has been recognized and explained in very clear terms. The Holy Quran declares: *"Say (O Muhammad), the Truth is from your Lord; let him who will, believe, and let him who will, reject (it) (you will not be responsible for it)."*[1]

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[1] The Quran, 18:29.

To fully understand monotheism, it is essential to know about polytheism too. The opposite of monotheism is polytheism. Polytheism is the greatest of sins. It has been very clearly stated in the Quran that if a man adopts polytheism and does not repent in his life, he will never be forgiven by Allah. Also, with the belief in polytheism, no righteous act shall be beneficial in the Hereafter.

The Holy Quran has explicitly declared polytheism to be the greatest sin. The humanity began its march on earth with the monotheistic belief. Hazrat Adam and Hazrat Hawwa (Eve) were the first ancestors of humanity. They and their progeny believed in monotheism. Polytheism crept in the later generations of humanity. It all started during the era of Prophet Noah when people sculpted idols of five righteous persons to celebrate their remembrance. However, the people of later generations instead of limiting themselves to remembering them started worshipping them. This way, idol-worship began. Due to ignorance some people think that the Ka`ba in Makkah was a temple and was the house for the idols of Makkeshwar and other gods and that Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh) after removing all these idols established the worship of One God; this is historically incorrect. Indeed there were many idols in the Ka`ba during the era of Prophet Muhammad, but in actuality, the Ka`ba had been constructed only for the worship of Allah, by Prophet Abraham thousands of years before the advent of Prophet Muhammad. It was only about 350 years before the birth of Prophet Muhammad that one of the leaders of Makkah, Umar bin Hai, brought a few idols from Syria and installed them in Ka`ba; from then on the idol-worship commenced in the Ka`ba.

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NATURE OF MONOTHEISM

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It is an undeniable truth that man is the most important creation of the Creator, Almighty Allah. Of all the numerous creatures, things and natural creations, only man has been given some particular rights, according to which he is free to use his intellect both in good or bad ways. He leads his life according to his choice. Evidently, this freedom and the power of choice are man's test and trial; otherwise, he is also bound by the various established laws that bind the sun, the moon and other natural creations. If he desires, he can lead his life according to the Divine Guidance and Commands and thus achieve success in this world and the Hereafter. On the contrary, by leading his life on his own whims and fancies, he will have to face the dire consequences of failure.

Man is that creature whom Allah has given such power and faculties that he, to a limited extent, can either profit from the resources available in the universe or can exploit and misuse them. From this point of view, it is quite clear that the position that has been bestowed on man in the universe has a purpose. It is for a particular objective that countless resources have been provided for man.

It may be easily understood that man should not only acknowledge the bounties of the Creator and Sustainer Lord who has created him and the entire universe, but should thank Him completely and serve Him alone. In this manner, a beautiful relationship is formed between man and the universe and its creations. A few polytheists can deny and ridicule this relationship, but man cannot ever bring in any changes in this delicate relationship. This reality has existed as a proven fact in every age. Still, it is strange and surprising that the eyes of the blind are not getting opened.

This relationship between the universe and man demands that man becomes an obedient servant of his Sustainer – Allah – and lead his life according to his commands and guidance. Ignoring Allah, who is the sole Creator and Sustainer of the Universe, no other entity should be designated

as worthy of our worship, reverence or obedience. One should become a monotheist with clear and pure intention and believe One God (Allah) to be worthy of his worship and reverence. He should revert to Allah alone for the fulfilment of all his necessities, desires and requirements, supplicate Him alone with all humble devotion, and try his best to achieve His good pleasure. Man has got only one heart which has adequacy to hold only the devotion of One Allah. Hence, the devotion cannot be divided, and it is desirable for the soul also to have only the devotion of One Allah.

The aforesaid kind of sublime relationship which man develops with his Creator and the proper perception and use of capacities results in the development of virtue, sublime qualities, good conduct, morality and truthfulness. Human life is free from maladies and worries, and acquires the best means of obtaining the good pleasure of Allah which in turn makes man succeed both in this world and in the Hereafter.

Contrary to this, one who denies and ignores this natural relationship of man with his Creator is not only ungrateful but makes his life extremely complicated and problematic, which ultimately results in failure and despair. The human history informs us that man has been using his freedom of choice wilfully, freely without any hindrance and according to his whims and fancies, while on the other hand man's Merciful Creator and Cherisher has been bestowing him with His guidance time and again whenever man went astray. The last such guidance has been sent by Him through his last and final Prophet, Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh). Whenever the Divine Teachings were denied and rejected and they were corrupted, it had adverse and negative effects on the society and deterioration began to set in. On all such occasions, the Most Powerful and Merciful Allah sent his Prophets and Messengers and whenever needed also sent down his Books for man's guidance. In this way, the Merciful Lord made arrangements to deliver those teachings to man which man had forgotten. The Prophets and Messengers of Allah were sent to each and every part of the world, and Allah's Messengers must have been sent to India too. All the Prophets began their preaching with the concept of Oneness of God (*Tawheed*), and were so steadfast on it that they were never ready to compromise on it even to a hair's breadth. The opponents of Allah's final Prophet, Hazrat Muhammad, too frequently wanted him to compromise, but he never compromised even though they offered him many inducements

and by way of bribe offered all those things that they could afford; but in spite of all these efforts they could not swerve the Prophet of Allah (pbuh).

Islam: The Pure Monotheistic Religion

The literal meaning of "Islam" is obeying the command, i.e. obeying the commands of one Allah. The one who obeys the commands of Allah is called Muslim. The word Islam is formed from the Arabic root word *"silm,"* whose literal meaning is peace. Hence, the meaning of the word Islam is also peace.

Islam is a purely monotheistic religion. That is, it declares that the God of the entire universe is one and that He alone is worthy of our worship and reverence. In the Islamic terminology, the Master, the Venerable Lord, the Cherisher is called *Allah.* However, before proceeding further it would be better to know the literal meaning of the word *Allah.* Moulana Abul Kalam Azad has explained the meaning of *Allah* in his renowned exegesis of Chapter 1 of the Quran titled *Umm al-Kitab (Tafseer Surat al- Fatiha)* in the following words:

> "From the study of the Semitic languages we find that there had been in use a particular composition of sounds and letters to denote divinity, and in the Hebrew, Syriac, Aramaic, Chaldean, Himyarite, Arabic, and other Semitic languages this linguistic particularity is found, and that particularity is the root of *Alif, Lam* and *Ha* and it has derived into many forms. The word *Alahia* of Chaldean and Syriac, the *Aluha* of Hebrew, and *Ilah* of Arabic are all derived from it, and certainly this word *Ilah* after the addition of the definitive article (*al*) has become *Allah* and the definitive article has particularised it only for the Creator of the Universe.
>
> "However, if *Allah* has been derived from *Ilah,* then what is the meaning of *Ilah.* There are many opinions of etymologists in this regard. The strongest opinion in this regard seems to be that its root is *Ilah,* and the meaning of *Ilah* is "astonishment" and "decrepitude." Some have stated that it is derived from *Walah,* which also means the same. Hence, this word is considered very important for denoting the Creator of the Universe, because whatever man knows and can know about Him is nothing but astonishment and decrepitude of the human

> intellect. The more the man ponders about that Supreme Entity the more it increases the astonishment and decrepitude of the intellect, when ultimately he will come to know that the path towards this begins with astonishment and indigence and ends with astonishment and indigence."[1]

Explaining further the meaning of the word *Allah*, Moulana Abu Muhammad Imamuddin Ramnagari says:

> "The meaning of *Ilah* is venerable; one who is worthy of worship. Hence, every entity, living or nonliving, can be called *Ilah* who is worshipped. The object of adding *"alif"* and *"lam"* to this word *Ilah* is to declare One God – Allah – alone is worthy of worship. Apart from Him, none has the right to be worshiped and revered."[2]

The word *Allah* has this inherent important quality that it can be used for only One Venerable Lord. According to the usage of the language, it cannot be used for anyone else other than Him. This word does not have either a plural or a gender. This word cannot be translated with the English word "god" because this word "god" is used for many gods, goddesses, important persons, and living and nonliving things and entities. However, to explain and understand, it can be translated as God; though all good names are for Allah alone. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) in one of his Sayings has said that Allah has 99 names and they are known as *Asmaul Husna* (the Most Beautiful Names). It is mentioned in the Holy Quran:

> *"Say: Call upon Allah, or call upon Rahman; by whatever names you call upon Him (it is well), for to Him belong the Most Beautiful Names."* (The Quran, 17:110)

> *"The most beautiful names belong to Allah; so call on him by them, but shun men as use profanity in His names; for what they do, they will soon be requited."* (The Quran, 7:180)

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[1] Abul Kalam Azad, *Umm al-Kitab (Tafseer Surat al-Fatiha)*, p. 27 (Itaqad Publishing House, New Delhi, June 1987)

[2] Abu Muhammad Imamuddin Ramnagari, *Islam ka Eikeshwarwad*, p. 1; (Islami Sahitya Sadan, Ramnagar, Varanasi)

> *"Allah! There is no god but He! To Him belong the Most Beautiful Names."* (The Quran, 20:8)

Allah is One

The meaning of Allah being One is inherent in the word *Allah.* In the Holy Quran, we find many Verses with regard to the Oneness of Allah; some of them are as follows:

> *"And your God is One God; there is no God but He, Most Gracious, Most Merciful!"* (The Quran, 2:163)

> *"And He is Allah; there is no god but He."* (The Quran, 28:70)

> *"Say: He is Allah, the One and Only."* (The Quran, 112:1)

> *"Allah has said: Take not (for worship) two gods, for He is Just One God."* (The Quran, 16:51)

In reality, the fountainhead of Islamic teachings is monotheism (Oneness of God). In other words it is the foundation stone of Islam. *La Ilaha Illallah* (*there is no god but Allah*) is the first part of the Islamic Creed, believing in which is obligatory on every Muslim. When we look at the entire creation with open eyes and through our intellect and intelligence, we do not find any signs of more than one god. The word *Brahmand* (universe) itself proves this truth. In many religious scriptures quotations in this regard are found which disclose this truth. The human nature, in reality, is attracted by monotheism, because it is in conformity with his nature. The Holy Quran says:

> *"Allah puts forth a Parable – A man belonging to many partners at variance with each other, and a man belonging entirely to one master; are those two equal in comparison? Praise be to Allah! But most of them have no knowledge."* (The Quran, 39:29)

Allah has no Partners

Allah has no partners. His power is indivisible. As there cannot be two rulers in a kingdom, so also there can be only one ruler in the entire universe. If at any place two different commands are issued simultaneously on a single issue, the

system cannot be run smoothly and satisfactorily. It is mentioned in the Quran:

> *"If there were, in the heavens and the earth, other gods besides Allah, there would have been confusion in the universe."* (The Quran, 21:22)

Allah is the Creator of the entire universe. He has not created the universe with the help of others. He does not have the weaknesses of the created beings. The Holy Quran avers:

> *"Allah, the Eternal, Absolute; He begets not, nor is He begotten; and there is none like unto Him."* (The Quran, 112:2-4)

Every creature in the universe is the servant of Allah:

> *"Do you not see that to Allah bow down in worship all things that are in the heavens and on earth – the sun, the moon, the stars; the hills, the trees, the animals; and a great number among mankind and even those who have become eligible for punishment?"* (The Quran, 22:18)

Allah has neither made anyone His son or daughter nor has he designated anyone as His partner. Numerous Verses of the Quran refute these false assertions:

> *"They say: 'Allah has begotten a son'; glory be to Him – Nay, to Him belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth; everything renders worship to Him."* (The Quran, 2:116)

> *"No son did Allah beget, nor is there any god along with Him; (if there were many gods), behold, each god would have taken away what he had created, and some would have lorded it over others! Glory to Allah! (He is free) from the (sort of) things they attribute to Him! He knows what is hidden and what is open; too high is He for the partners they attribute to Him!"* (The Quran, 23:91-92)

> *"They make the Jinns equals with Allah, though Allah did create the Jinns; and they falsely, having no knowledge, attribute to Him sons and daughters. Praise and glory be to Him (for He is) above what they attribute to Him! To*

Him is due the primal origin of the heavens and the earth: How can He have a son when He has no consort? He created all things, and He has full knowledge of all things." (The Quran, 6:100, 101)

Say: Come, I will rehearse what Allah has (really) prohibited you from: Join not anything as equal with Him." (The Quran, 6:151)

Polytheism (*Shirk*)

The literal meaning of *shirk* (polytheism) is "to make someone a partner, participant or associate, and declaring someone a partner of someone." In the Islamic terminology, it means associating someone with Allah or declaring someone His partner in His entity, His power, His rights and His authority. Intellectual and logical proof for this perception of polytheism does not exist at all. Man's nature is against it. This has been censured in the Holy Quran and people have been instructed to desist from it. Allah may forgive every sin but will not forgive polytheism. It is mentioned in the Quran:

"Allah forgives not that partners should be set with Him; but He forgives anything else, to whom He pleases." (The Quran, 4:48)

"They worship, besides Allah, things that hurt them not nor profit them, and they say: 'These are our intercessors with Allah.' ...Glory to Him! And far is He above the partners they ascribe (to Him)!" (The Quran, 10:18)

"And they have taken (for worship) gods other than Allah, to give them power and glory. Instead, these false gods shall reject their worship, and become adversaries against them." (The Quran, 19:81, 82)

"Lo! It is from their own invention they say that Allah has begotten children, but indeed they are liars." (The Quran, 37:151, 152)

"Say: 'Is it someone other than Allah that you order me to worship, O you ignorant ones?' But it has already been revealed to you – as it was to those before you – 'If you were to join (gods with Allah), truly fruitless will be you work (in life), and you will surely be in the ranks of

those who lose (all spiritual good)." (The Quran, 39:64, 65)

"Say: I am commanded to worship Allah, and not to join partners with Him. Unto Him do I call, and unto Him is my return." (The Quran, 13:36)

"Whoever rejects Evil and believes in Allah has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that never breaks. (The Quran, 2:256)

The polytheist, i.e. the person who associates and joins others as partners with Allah, becomes helpless and miserable in his life. His condition becomes similar to the person who falls from the sky and becomes desolate. The Holy Quran says:

"Be true in faith to Allah, and never assign partners to Him; if anyone assigns partners to Allah, he is as if had fallen from heaven and been snatched up by birds, or the wind had swooped (like a bird on its prey) and thrown him into a far-distant place." (The Quran, 22:31)

"It is He Who is God in heaven and God on earth; and He is Full of Wisdom and Knowledge. And blessed is He to whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth: With Him is the knowledge of the Hour (of Judgement); and to Him shall you be brought back. And those whom they invoke besides Allah have no power of intercession – only he who bears witness to the Truth, and they know (him). If you ask them, Who created them, they will certainly say, Allah; how then are they deluded away (from the Truth)?" (The Quran, 43:84-87)

Monotheism in the Hindu Religion

Hindu religion is based on Vedas. Vedas describe essential characteristics and powers of God. The concept of God being One has been very clearly mentioned in the Vedas; no evidence is found in them in favour of polytheism. For example, in Rig-Veda, the following Mantra is found which clearly mentions the concept of monotheism. Such Mantras are also found in Atharva Veda, and many other Hindu Scriptures.

To what is One, sages give many a title." (Rig-Veda, 1-164-46)[1]

A similar Mantra is also found in Yajur Veda too (32-1).

Explaining the aforesaid Mantra, Pundit Damodar Satwalekar writes: "As man is introduced through various attributive names like father, brother, etc. though from these various names only one person is mentioned and understood, similarly from fire, air and other attributive words only One God is meant and understood. Therefore, getting caught in the whirlpool of believing in numerous gods because of various attributive names is in no way correct."[2]

There is only One God of the entire universe and He alone is worthy of worship and praise. It is stated in the Rig Veda:

"He is One; worship Him alone." (6-45-16)
"Do not worship anyone else." (8-1-1)[3]

"The Lord of the Universe, none is like Him, He alone is the Protector and the Splendid King." (Rig Veda, 6-36-4)[4]

"There is only One Lord of the entire universe, worthy of worship and worthy of praise." (Atharva Veda, 2-2-1)[5]

"He is only One, who is worthy of praise and worship." (Atharva Veda, 2-2-2)[6]

The Yajur Veda says that God does not assume the human shape or body.

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[1] *The Hymns of the Rigveda,* Translated by Griffith, Ralph T.H., 2nd Edition, Kotagiri (Nilgiri), 1896.

[2] Pundit Damodar Satwalekar, *Yajurveda ka Subodh Bhashya,* p. 530.

[3] These two Mantras have been quoted by Pundit Ganga Prasad Upadhayay in his book *Islam ke Deepak,* p. 402, 385, Amar Swami Pakashan Vibhag, Ghaziabad, UP.

[4] Swami Dayanand Sarawati, *Rig Veda Bhashya,* p. 498.

[5] Pundit Shamkaran Das Trivedi.

[6] Pundit Ganga Prasad Upadhayay in his book *Islam ke Deepak,* p. 402, 385, Amar Swami Pakashan Vibhag, Ghaziabad, UP.

> *He hath attained unto the Bright, Bodiless, Woundless, Sinewless, the Pure which evil hath not pierced. Far-sighted, wise, encompassing, he self-existent hath prescribed aims, as propriety demands, unto the everlasting Years."* (40-8)[1]

Pundit Shripad Damodar Satwalekar has explained this Mantra thus: "He (the God) is found everywhere. He is bodiless and sinew-less. He is woundless. He is pure and courageous. He is not pierced by evil. He is the Lord of the hearts and wise. He is the most eminent and is always triumphant. He has firmly established Himself by His own power. He keeps on doing and creating whatever things area needed to be done and created."[2]

In the Atharva Veda, God's indivisibility (i.e. Oneness) has been very clearly mentioned:

> *"To him who knows this God as simple and one. Neither second, nor third, nor yet fourth is he called; He is called neither fifth, nor sixth, nor yet seventh; He is called neither eighth, nor ninth, nor yet tenth. He watches over creatures, all that breathes and that breathes not. This conquering might has entered him. He is the sole, the simple One, the One alone, in him these Deities become simple and One."* (Atharva Veda, 13-4-15 to 21)[3]

Explaining the meaning of the aforesaid Mantras, Swami Dayanand Saraswati writes:

> "From all the above Mantras, it becomes evident that God is only One. Apart from Him, there is no second, nor third, nor does any fourth god exist. Nor exists any sixth, and nor is there any seventh god. There is no eighth, or ninth or tenth god. However, He has always been Supreme. There is none apart from Him. ...He does not take help from anyone in his tasks as He is the Most Powerful."[4]

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[1] *The Text of the White Yajurveda,* Translated by Griffith, Ralph T.H. (1899)

[2] Pundit Damodar Satwalekar, *Yajurveda ka Subodh Bhashya,* p. 647.

[3] *The Hymns of the Atharva Veda,* Translated by Griffith, Ralph T.H.

[4] *Dayanand Granth Mala,* p. 337-338.

Pundit Shyamkaran Das Trivedi and Pundit Satwalekar have also given a resembling explanation of the aforesaid Mantras. However, there is difference in the serial number of the Mantras.

Mantras about the Oneness of God are found in Rig Veda (1-164-6, 3-54-8, 8-58-2, 10-82-3, 10-82-6, 10-82-7, 10-129-2 and 10-129-3), in Atharva Veda (10-2-23, 10-7-21, 10-8-6, 10-8-11, 10-8-28, and 10-8-29) and Yajur Veda (32-8, 32-9, 40-4, and 40-5).[1]

In the aforesaid Mantras, the perception of God being One, He alone being the Most Powerful and the Supreme Authority has been very clearly stated. According to Dr. P.V. Kanu, God being One is also mentioned in Mantras 8-58-1 and 10-129-2 of the Rig Veda. Dr. Kanu also says that even in Mahabharata and some of the Puranas, the concept of Oneness of God is found and to prove his point he has also given quotations from these books; e.g. Van Parv (39-76, 77), Shanti Parv (343-131), Braham Purana (192-51), Vishnu Purana (5-18-50), and Harivansh (Vishnu Purana, 25-31).[2]

The concept of Oneness of God is also found in the following Mantras: Rig Veda 10-12-3, 10-12-11 and Yajur Veda 13-4, 23-1, 23-3. In addition to these, many more Mantras are found in the Vedas which affirm the concept of Oneness of God. In other words, conception of polytheism is not found in the Vedas.

God is the Supreme Ruler. He does not have any image, form or shape. He is the Supreme Ruler (Yajur Veda 8-37); He is the Sovereign of the moveable and the immoveable (Yajur Veda 36-8); none is superior to Him (Yajur Veda, 32-6); He has no image (Yajur Veda 32-3).[3]

The attributes of God have been mentioned as follows: He is the Sustainer; He is the Omniscient; He is the Adjudicator; He is the Light; He is endowed with the Power to nourish; He

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[1] *Vishv Jayanti,* Veda Number, p. 164-169, Article of Dr. Shiv Bandhu, Hoshiarpur, June-July, 1972.

[2] *Dharmshastr ka Ittihas,* Part V, p. 393.

[3] Pundit Damodar Satwalekar, *Yajurveda ka Subodh Bhashya,* p. 551.

leads towards prosperity through excellent path; every action and deed is in His knowledge; He fights crookedness and evil.[1]

In the Yajur Veda many Mantras are found through which emphasis has been laid on the faith of One God. Leaving Him aside, believers in numerous entities have been severely warned. Ponder over the following Mantra:

> *"Enveloped by the Lord must be This All – each thing that moves on earth. With that renounced enjoy thyself. Covet no wealth of any man."* (Yajur Veda, 40:1)

> *"Deep into shade of blinding gloom fall Asambhuti's worshippers. They sink to darkness deeper yet who on Sambhuti are intent."* (Yajur Veda, 40:9)

Explanatory note: "Those 'Asambhutis' i.e. who worship the non-existent and non-beneficial things in place of God are drowned in the sea of darkness i.e. the sea of ignorance and sorrow. And the 'Sambhutis' who worship the created things like the things produced out of earth, stones, body-parts created out of wood and the human body are in more darkness, i.e. these fools shall suffer eternal sorrow and extreme sufferings."

Monotheism in the Upanishad

In the Upanishad too the concept of monotheism (Oneness of God) is found. Upanishads are interconnected with the four Vedas and some of the Mantras are common to each other. In the Shvetashvatara Upanishad, monotheism (Oneness of God) has been described in the following manner:

> *"The ruler who rules alone by his powers, who rules all the worlds by his powers, who is one and the same, while things arise and exist, -- they who know this are immortal. For there is one God only, they do not allow a second, who rules all the worlds by his powers. He stands behind all persons, and after having created all worlds he, the protector, rolls it up at the end of time."* (3-1, 2)[2]

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[1] *Ibid,* p. 648.

[2] *The Upanishads, Part II,* Translated by Max Muller, (1884).

There is only One God, although He is known by many names. It is mentioned in Kaivalya Upanishad:

> *He is God, He is The Absolute, He is Eternal, the Supreme, the Self-luminous, He alone is All.* (8)[1]

God is One, He is Supernatural (Khandogya Upanishad 6-2-1); none is Supreme to Him (Shvetashvatara Upanishad 3-9); He does not have many different forms and shapes.

In the Yajur Veda too, this has been mentioned:

> *"Deep into shade of blinding gloom fall Asambhûti's worshippers. They sink to darkness deeper yet who on Sambhuti are intent."* (40-9)[2]

Explaining the aforesaid Mantra, Raj Bahadur Panday writes: "Those who worship various gods abandoning the One God enter into the darkness of ignorance; and those are intent on following their passions are in even more darkness."[3]

Out of the vast material that is available with regard to the real nature of God, His Venerability and Glory, in the Vedas, the Upanishads, and the Bhagavad Gita, only a small portion has been given here. However, we reach the conclusion that God is One and He is Supreme and Imperishable. He has no partners. He has many names, but He does not have any form or shape. He does not have a body, nor does he adopts a body. He is the Sovereign of the entire universe and controls, sustains and creates everything in it. He is capable of doing everything and is the most powerful. He alone is the Sovereign and Ruler of the entire world and the universe. None is like Him.

Vicious Results of Imaginary and Fabricated Conception

Whatever is believed, contrary to the facts mentioned above about the attributes of God is nothing but imaginary and

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[1] Jacques, Kenneth, *The Philosophy of the Kaivalya Upanishad,* Advaita Philosophy Ashram

[2] *The Texts of the White Yajur Veda,* Translated by Griffith, Ralph T.H., (1899).

[3] Raj Bahadur Panday, *Yajur Veda,* p. 159, Diamond Pocket Books.

pure fabrication. The eternal Truth in itself always remains the Truth.

However, even if we want some proof in this regard, we will find plenty of proofs and evidence of the Oneness of God everywhere in the universe. We can easily see and understand how well-organized and delicately balanced is the entire universe and every creation in it. Its orderliness and predicative nature is quite astonishing. Further, we also find in all the created things perfection, rationality, beauty, and usefulness. Order and perfection is found in the sun and the moon and all other celestial bodies and they are all bounded by fixed rules and regulations. If there were to be many gods in the universe, then everyone would have tried to impose his own sovereignty and to fulfil his own ambitions would have created disorder and confusion in the universe.

If we ponder on the basis of research, investigation, intellect and all other points of view, we reach the conclusion that God exists, He is One, He does not have any partners, He alone possesses all the authority and is All-Powerful. It is impudence and insolence to deny the existence of God and His Supremacy and Sovereignty.

Denying the Oneness of God and associating partners with Him is an insult to Him. This is not just man's insolence towards Him, but also a serious treachery and rebellion on man's part. It is very clear that when man rebels against the Creator who has created him, this crime becomes heinous. This rebellion affects man's character and conduct and creates various kinds of abnormalities and deterioration in his life. Monotheism (Oneness of God) is the safest and strongest refuge. A polytheist severs his natural and gratifying relationship with God thus falling into the state of confusion, anxiety, fear, and weakness this leads his life to destruction, affliction and difficulties. His life gets deprived of the good qualities like hope, happiness, exultation, courage, assiduousness, sense of responsibility and in their place passions and bad emotions and evil desires take root which not only render the life miserable in this world but a failure in the Hereafter. In other words, the desired development and progress of the personality of a polytheist gets hampered and obstructed. In this manner, man breaks his relationship with his human nature which in actuality comes into existence with the faith and belief in Allah. Without the belief in the Oneness of God, foundation for the brotherhood and unity of the mankind cannot

be established. This is such a conception and ideology that whenever it gets weakened, the unity and brotherhood of mankind gets destroyed resulting in the birth of an unfair and exploitative society. It is also a great beneficence of Allah on man that he saved him from bowing his head in front of others. In this manner, Allah preserved man's honour and dignity and saved him from lowliness and deprivation.

It is man's prime duty to worship and serve One Allah, Who is Omnipotent, Formless, Equitable, Much-Forgiving, Merciful, Unbegotten, Incomparable, Immortal, Eternal, Omnipresent, Omniscient, All-Pervading, Absolute Monarch, Pure and the Creator of the Universe and everything in it. The Holy Quran avers:

> *"Allah! There is no god but He – the Living, the Self-subsisting, Eternal. No slumber can seize Him nor sleep. His are all things in the heavens and on earth. Who is there can intercede in His presence except as He permits? He knows what (appears to His creatures as) before or after or behind them. Nor shall they compass aught of His knowledge except as He wills. His Throne (authority) does extend over the heavens and the earth, and He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them, for He is the Most High, the Supreme (in glory)."* (The Quran, 2:255).

THE FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPT OF MONOTHEISM

Dr. Farhat Husain

To believe in the existence of Allah is not just the field of deliberation, logic and use of intellect. Rather, it is man's inner voice, demand of his heart, and the call of his inner self. Human nature desires that man should have faith in Allah. This faith and belief has deep relationship with man's personality. This relationship is like the relationship of a flower with its beauty, fire with heat and light, water with its flow and current. The entire universe is energized by Allah's power and energy. The entire function of the human body is being carried out with the full knowledge and command of Allah; breathing, digestion, blood circulation, passing of stool, etc. automatically function. In the same manner man's soul too wants to have Divine guidance. This is the point which is the foundation of religion and divinity. It is a fact that Allah is the greatest Truth of human life, denying which the significance and purpose of life cease to exist. It is our duty to make the conception of Allah pure and uncontaminated. The world has overwhelmed our consciousness to such an extent that we never give any thought towards our souls and never ponder about Allah and that He exists. Although some desire is found to know Him, but we are never serious about it, because every person is set on some point or the other and he is contented with it. Supreme desire and resolute efforts are required to gain knowledge about Allah and achieve His nearness.

Man sees many kinds of wondrous and miraculous things happening in the world, and even his body in itself is a miracle. All the things in the universe are seen to be bounded by an order. The rise of the sun in the morning and its disappearance in the night; appearance of stars in the night; sweet-smelling flowers; green herbage; birds and animals; rivers and rivulets; hills and mountains, in fact, wherever we look wonderful creations and sightings are seen, and in all of them we can see the craftsmanship of a Greatest Craftsman. All these creations have a purpose and are beneficial. Everything that man requires has been made available here; along with fulfilling

the necessity, aesthetics have also been maintained in every creation.

We also notice that there is mutual collaboration and cooperation between all the things and the energies found in the universe, which cannot be the result of coincidence or chance. The world and man has not come into existence by chance; they have been created. Can anyone imagine creation of a thing without its creator? The Holy Quran declares:

> *"Is there a doubt about Allah, the Creator of the heavens and the earth?"* (The Quran, 14:10)

When we do not doubt the existence of the heavens and the earth, then why do we doubt about their Creator? Even the very existence of man itself is the proof of the existence of a Great Creator; the other creations also are witness to this reality.

It is just not that Allah is the Creator of all things in this world and the universe, but He alone organises and manages them. For millions of years the entire universe and all the creations in it are functioning on set rules and regulations. The light and energy of the sun has remained the same and they reach various parts of the earth with the same regularity; the orbit and revolutions of the moon never change; the system of rainfall has remained the same; the pattern of the growth of plants and trees has not changed. In other words along with creation, the management, nourishment and sustenance of all created things are undertaken by the Creator Himself.

He is One

All these tasks are accomplished by Allah alone. Its proof is the coordination that is found in all the creations. The way in which the sea water rises in the shape of clouds, and these clouds getting dragged by the winds to the various parts of the earth and then rain falling from them, and various similar kind of activities that take place with similar fashion and regularity all indicate and prove the fact that Allah is One. As it is not feasible to have many principals of a single college and many owners of a single factory, so also it is not possible and feasible to have many gods of this universe. Having doubts in the existence of Allah or associating one or more partners with him is neither logical nor is it justifiable.

A Question

Here a question can be asked. If there is Allah, why does not He give us knowledge about His existence? In answer, we say that he has always given knowledge about it through his Messengers and Prophets. There is a long list of Prophets of Allah in the annals of human history. Their teachings have all been the same. All of them called people towards the worship, servitude and obedience of One Allah, and showed them that life-giving path which was divine, following which they could gain success, peace and tranquillity in this world and the Hereafter. These Messengers were sent in every era, in every part of the world and to every nation. When man entered the global era of civilization, the last and final Prophet, Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh) was sent with the universal message. This message is available in two forms. One is the Word of Allah which has been preserved in the Holy Quran, and the other is called Hadeeth which comprises of the biography of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), his thoughts, and his edicts. According to the Islamic concept, it is essential to believe in all the Prophets. However, in the present circumstances, we have to follow only Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and the Holy Quran, because it is the final edition of the Divine Guidance.

Gist of the Teachings of the Prophets

The teaching of all the Prophets, in reality, is not only theism but monotheism. The gist of their teachings is that the Creator and Cherisher of man and the entire universe is Allah and therefore, He alone is worthy of our worship. He is Omnipotent and Omniscient. Everything in the universe is dependent on Him and He is not dependent on anything. He is free from all defects and weaknesses. He is so Omnipotent that creating, sustaining and managing this vast universe does not tire Him. He is not the offspring of anyone nor is anyone his offspring. Hence, he is capable of taking unbiased decisions. Everything in this world obeys his commands. The sun, the moon, the stars, the planets, wind, birds and animals, plants and trees, everything, is bound by His Law. Man has been given the freedom of thought and action for his test and trial, even though all physical parts of his body and his senses function according to the rules and regulations formulated by his Creator. Divine Power and Sovereignty belong to Him. Birth and death are in His Hands and He alone controls the destiny. He alone has the authority to take account of man's deeds and reward or punish

him accordingly. None is associated with Him in these Divine Attributes, and therefore, man should surrender before Him, worship Him alone, seek Help from Him alone, and be always grateful to Him. To achieve peace and tranquillity in the present life and success in the life in the Hereafter it is essential to sincerely follow the instructions, principles and commands sent by Allah.

Effects of Monotheism on Human Life

Monotheism has far-reaching effects on human life.

1. The viewpoint of the person who believes in One God gets broadened. He believes in an entity who is worthy of worship, who is the Creator and Cherisher of the earth and the heavens. The result of such a belief is that nothing in this world looks "alien" to him. His sense of kindness, love and service never gets contracted.

2. Belief in One God takes man to the summit of self-respect in that he seeks help from Him alone and worships and supplicates Him alone.

3. Man gains respect and resoluteness. No difficulty and inconvenience can make him deviate from the straight path. He is bestowed with the sense of fearlessness and renunciation. He will not be arrogant and haughty. Bad habits and attributes like covetousness, avarice, etc. gets suppressed and discrimination, inequality and untouchability are eradicated because of the belief that every human being is part of one family, and they have all been created by One Creator, Allah.

4. The person who has faith in Allah and who accepts the instructions and commands sent by Him and does not ignore the glad tidings and warnings sent by Allah through His Messengers, will be capable of fully discharging his responsibilities. Such a person acknowledges the sovereignty of Allah over his body and soul thereby it becomes impossible for him to keep his exoteric (external) and esoteric (internal) self impure.

5. The real monotheism demands that man should sincerely surrender himself before Allah and mould his will in accordance with the Will of Allah. Love for one's nation, country, tribe or community should not contradict his belief in the concept of monotheism. A monotheist not only worships and serves Allah

but he also surrenders his entire life to Allah. It is mentioned in the Quran:

> *"Say: Truly, my prayer and my service of sacrifice, my life and my death, are (all) for Allah, the Cherisher of the Worlds."* (The Quran, 6:162)

Teachings of the Quran and Various Other Religious Scriptures

The Holy Quran teaches pure monotheism (Oneness of God). More than one third of the teachings of the Quran are on this subject. The teachings of the other prominent religious scriptures such as Vedas and the Bible too pronounce the concept of monotheism. As an example, a few selected portions of all the three Scriptures are given below:

The Holy Quran

One of the small chapters of the Holy Quran beautifully describes the Oneness of Allah in the following manner:

> *"Say: He is Allah, the One and Only; Allah, the Eternal, Absolute; He begets not, nor is He begotten; and there is none like unto Him."* (The Quran, 112)

The entity of Allah and His Attributes has been described in the Holy Quran as follows:

> *"Allah! There is no god but He – the Living, the Self-subsisting, Eternal. No slumber can seize Him nor sleep. His are all things in the heavens and on earth. Who is there can intercede in His presence except as He permits? He knows what (appears to His creatures as) before or after or behind them. Nor shall they compass aught of His knowledge except as He wills. His Throne (authority) does extend over the heavens and the earth, and He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them, for He is the Most High, the Supreme (in glory)."* (The Quran, 2:255).

In another place, Allah and His Attributes have been described even more clearly thus:

"Allah is He, than Whom there is no other god – Who knows (all things) both secret and open; He, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.
Allah is He, than Whom there is no other god – the Sovereign, the Holy One, the Source of Peace (and Perfection), the Guardian of Faith, the Preserver of Safety, the Exalted in Might, the Irresistible, the Supreme; Glory to Allah! (High is He) above the partners they attribute to Him.
He is Allah, the Creator, the Evolver, the Bestower of Forms (or Colours). To Him belong the Most Beautiful Names. Whatever is in the heavens and on earth, does declare His Praises and Glory; and He is the Exalted in Might, the Wise." (The Quran, 59:22-24)

Hence, the Holy Quran calls on the humankind:

"O you people, worship your Guardian Lord, Who created you and those who came before you, that you may become righteous." (The Quran, 2:21)

The Holy Quran further states that Allah is the one who listens to the cries of the sufferer and the oppressed:

"Who listens to the (soul) distressed when it calls on Him, and who relieves its suffering, and makes you (mankind) inheritors of the earth? (Can there be another) god besides Allah? Little it is that you heed!" (The Quran, 27:62)

People wander and adopt numerous methods to achieve satisfaction of the hearts, but seldom do they achieve it. The Holy Quran shows us the sure way of achieving that satisfaction. It avers:

"Verily, in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find satisfaction." (The Quran, 13:28)

Evidences, signs and proofs for all these things are available in the entire universe. The Quran points out to some of these signs and evidences thus:

"It is Allah Who sends forth the Winds, so that they raise up the clouds, and We drive them to a land that is dead, and revive the earth therewith after its death; even so (will be) the Resurrection." (The Quran, 35:9)

"The allegory in this Verse is double. (1) Dry, unpromising soil may seem, to all intents and purposes, dead; there is no source of water near; moisture is sucked up by the sun's heat in a far-off ocean, and clouds are formed; winds arise; it seems as if the wind is blowing away the clouds wherever it pleases, but it is really Allah's Providence that drives it to the dead land; the rain falls, and behold, there is life and motion and beauty everywhere! So in the spiritual world. Allah's Revelation is His Mercy and His Rain; there may be the individual resurrection or unfolding of a soul. (2) So again, may be the general Resurrection, the unfolding of a new World in the Hereafter, out of an old World that is folded up and dead."[1]

> *"It is Allah Who causes the seed grain and the date stone to split and sprout. He causes the living to issue from the dead, and He is the One to cause the dead to issue from the living. That is Allah: then how are you deluded away from the truth?"* (The Quran, 6:95)

> *"Verily, in the alternation of the Night and the Day, and in all that Allah has created, in the heavens and the earth, are Signs for those who fear Him."* (The Quran, 10:6)

> *"How can you reject the faith in Allah? – Seeing that you were without life, and He gave you life; then will He cause you to die, and will again bring you to life; and again to Him will you return."* (The Quran, 2:28)

It means that when you are seeing from close quarters the Divine Signs and Proofs that your own life is the living proof of Allah's Mercy and Power, the reason for your indifference towards Allah could only be that you are not worried about the Truth and the untruth nor do you have any feeling of gratitude towards the One Who is Beneficent to you.

> *"It is He Who has created for you (the faculties of) hearing, sight, feeling and understanding; little thanks it is you give!"* (The Quran, 23:78)

Finally, the Holy Quran asks a question which contains its answer too:

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[1] Allama Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Holy Quran, Text, Translation and Commentary,* p. 1103, Amana Corporation, Maryland, USA (1989).

"Are many lords differing among themselves better, or Allah, the One, Supreme and Irresistible?" (The Quran, 12:39)

The Vedas

The Vedas are believed to be very ancient scriptures. Teaching of monotheism is found in them. Some of very important Shlokas are given below:

"The Sovereign Ruler of this entire universe is One." (Rig Veda, 6/36/4)

"Only One God is worthy of praise and worship." (Atharva Veda, 2/2/1)

"(O God), none other like thee, of earth or of the heavens, hath been or ever will be born." (Yajur Veda, 27/36)[1]

"Enveloped by the Lord must be this all – each thing that moves on earth." (Yajur Veda, 40/1)[2]

"Here this one God, the Lord of men, looks forth exceeding far and wide; and we, for your advantage keep his holy laws." (Rig Veda, 8/25/16)[3]

"I know that Great Lord who is far away from darkness and is like light. By knowing Him alone, man passes over death and there is no other way of salvation." (Yajurveda)

The Bible

The Bible is the compendium of many religious scriptures. Although the authenticity of these books is doubtful,

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[1] *The Texts of the White Yajur Veda,* Translated by Griffith, Ralph T.H., (1899).

[2] *The Texts of the White Yajur Veda,* Translated by Griffith, Ralph T.H., (1899).

[3] *Ibid.*

still many statements can be found in them concerning the concept of monotheism. Some of them are presented here:[1]

> *"Remember the former things of old: for I* am *God, and* there is *none else;* I am *God, and* there is *none like me."* (Isaiah, 46:9)

> *"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."* (Deuteronomy, 6:4-7)

> *"See now that I,* even *I,* am *he, and* there is *no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither* is there any *that can deliver out of my hand."* (Deuteronomy, 32:39)

> *"For thou art great, and doest wondrous things; thou art God alone."* (Psalms, 86:10)

> *"O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth."* (Isaiah, 37:16)
> *"And Jesus answered him: The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all they mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment."* (Mark, 12:29-30)

> *"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."* (John, 17:3)

> *"For* there is *one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."* (1 Timothy, 2:5)

[1] The translations are from King James Version Bible.

Conclusion

From the evidence collected by contemplation, intellect and from religious scriptures, we reach the conclusion that the concept of monotheism (Oneness of God) is the foundation of human life, in the absence of which man's life is rendered as aimless as a severed kite or a fallen leaf, about which nobody knows where the gusts of wind would take it and dump. We should not only believe in the existence of Allah, but we should include him in our lives too. The tragedy of the present-day society is that it removes Allah from its day-to-day practical life. This is the reason that the society is facing numerous problems. When there is no fear of Allah in our hearts and when we do not take into consideration the likes and dislikes of Allah in our practical life, sense of morality cannot be established in the society. Without the promulgation of the commands and Law of Allah and without giving His Will prominence in every segment of human life, the honour and dignity of human life cannot be safeguarded, and there is no way of achieving peace and tranquillity in man's individual and social life.

THE REALITY AND DEMANDS OF MONOTHEISM AND ITS INFLUENCE ON HUMAN LIFE

Muhammad Zainul Abideen Mansoori

Man's nature, disposition and his soul demand that he should cultivate his mental, spiritual and practical relationships with a Divine Power. On the level of intellect and knowledge, man calls this Divine Power Allah, Iswar, Khuda, God and by many other names. We find a hazy perception of this Divine Power even in some of the inhabitants of remote part of Africa and aboriginal tribes of India and other parts of the world. Except for a few atheists, who exist today, none denied the existence of God in the entire human history. This reality and truth has been the basic factor of the religion of the Divine Power and central point of religious beliefs, and this "belief in God," i.e. "theism" has been the foundation of the eternal true religion.

The Reality of Monotheism

If the principle that "there is God and that man's life has an inevitable relationship with God" is converted into Faith, it will have deep, extensive, life-giving and positive influence on man and his life. But this would be possible only when the reality of monotheism is thoroughly known to man and also its demands are fulfilled. Otherwise, it is possible on the practical level that a person might believe in monotheism but might, knowingly or unknowingly, act as a polytheist thus depriving himself of the benefits and effects of monotheism. It is a horrible and serious affliction of human history that people and nations, in spite of having belief in monotheism, have been getting influenced and impressed by polytheism. Therefore, it is essential to understand the nature of polytheism to fully comprehend the concept of monotheism.

The Antithesis of Monotheism

Generally, people think that the relationship with God is confined to His worship. Since God is invisible and formless, to have concentration in His worship, people create His physical imaginary idols and images. With the passage of time, these idols and images are firmly believed to be the true representation

of God. This is the start of polytheism, and the "image" occupies the place of the "real" and these idols and images become the associates of One God and become the object of worship and devotion. Monotheism, after changes and alteration, takes the shape of polytheism. After slipping slightly from the path of Truth, the slide does not stop, and man neither gets tranquillity nor peace and happiness in his life. The history of religions and the righteous is witness to the fact that many prophets, messengers, rishis, munis, saints and other righteous men have been made objects of worship. Further, the footsteps of man slip even more and he begins to worship the sun, the moon, the stars, the planets, the fire, the ghosts, living and dead people, the philanthropists, the revolutionaries, parents, teachers, etc. He falls even further and begins to worship lowly creatures such as trees, hills, mountains, rivers, animals, birds, rats, snakes, etc. and then the motherland, the state, the wealth, man's body parts, and the equipment and appliances used in the factories, and even the modes of transport become objects of worship.

There is no end to the worship of different and innumerable gods; it manifests itself in newer and newer ways. In this manner, man broke into pieces the mirror of monotheism in which he could have seen clearly the image of his relationship with God and according to which he could have lived a truthful, equitable, better, peaceful and righteous individual, social and collective life. Instead of worshipping and serving One God, man has been bowing his head before innumerable gods which has resulted in losing his dignity and honour, though he has been created as the best and excellent creation among the creations of the universe. If we examine closely the ills, mischief and perditions which are found in man's individual, social and collective life and which we have not been able to eradicate in spite of our best efforts, we find the main reason behind all these to be polytheism. From this point, begins the onset of deficiency in human values, decline in human ethics, and destruction and disintegration of human honour and dignity. It is in the interest of the humanity that a right alternative to remove the tragedy that is engulfing it is found. If we seriously contemplate and ponder over it, this alternative presents itself before us in the form of "monotheism."

Pure Monotheism

Man's fundamental disposition does not show inclination in acquiring and using impure, bad, adulterated, spurious and

damaged goods, but is always desirous of acquiring pure and original goods. When man puts in his best efforts to acquire the best goods and articles for his material and physical life, he should put in extra efforts to acquire the purest things for his spiritual and religious segments of his life, because that is the dimension which makes man superior to the other creations of the universe. Those fortunate people, who make an endeavour to think in a different direction from the glittering and material race of the human life, usually entangle themselves in a mental and intellectual vicious circle and go astray. If this reality and truth remains in our view that in this situation the Most Merciful Allah will not leave his servants to go astray and that through His Prophets and Divine Scriptures, He must have fulfilled this important and the most essential requirement of humanity, then the tip of the entangled rope of monotheism – pure monotheism – would be available to mankind. It is not just a new ideology; rather the knowledge about the required "pure monotheism" had been imparted through the Prophets and religious scriptures not only in every era of the past human history but also in the present era too. Although this was known in different eras, with different tribes and nations by various and different names, in the present era (i.e. for the past 1400 years), it is known by the name of "Islam."

Pure Monotheism and Islam

Islam does not handover the responsibility of safeguarding the interpretation of monotheism from confusion, entanglement, indefiniteness and opacity to the mystics, religious scholars and others. Allah has taken full responsibility of explaining and interpreting the concept of pure monotheism through His Book, the Quran, which was revealed on His Prophet, Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh) during the period from 610 AD to 632 AD. A greater part of the Quran deals with the teachings pertaining to monotheism. To exemplify, only two excerpts from the Quran are given below:

> *"Say: He is Allah, the One and Only;[1] Allah the Eternal, Absolute;[1] He begets not, nor is He begotten;[2] and there is none like unto Him."*[3] (The Quran, 112:1-4)

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[1] That is, He is not "many." Allah, the One True God, possesses all the qualities and attributes of power and capabilities that one can think of.

> *"Allah! There is no god but He – the Living, the Self-subsisting, Eternal.*[4] *No slumber can seize Him nor sleep.*[5] *His are all things in the heavens and on earth. Who is there can intercede in His presence except as He permits?*[6] *He knows what (appears to His creatures as) before or after or behind them. Nor shall they compass aught of His knowledge except as He wills. His Throne (authority) does extend over the heavens and the earth, and He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them, for He is the Most High, the Supreme (in glory)."* (The Quran, 2:255).

The concise picture in which the afore-mentioned Verses of the Quran describe the pure monotheism, has been explained in many places in the Quran in detail with examples, proof and evidences (which can be found in man's own body and self and in the entire universe). However, the aforesaid concise Verses too present a very clear and unambiguous picture of pure monotheism to all men of intelligence and prudence so that they can compare it with polytheism and have a correct perspective of pure monotheism. After seeing this picture, no intelligent and just person can remain incapable or can be deprived of gaining the knowledge about the reality of pure monotheism.

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[1] That is, He is not dependent on any other entity. He does not require any help or assistance from anyone to manage, administer, sustain and cherish the entire universe.

[2] That is, neither has He any offspring, nor is He the offspring of any other.

[3] That is, He is unique and there is none like Him.

[4] That is, Allah is sustaining the entire universe on His Own Power, and He does not require any assistance from other imaginary gods and demigods to look after the universe.

[5] That is, Allah is free from all human weaknesses like slumber, sleep, (and hunger, thirst, etc.).

[6] That is, to reach Him, to obtain his good pleasure and forgiveness, and get protection from his wrath and rage, unlike the courts of temporal kings and leaders where intercession is common, none can intercede in the court of Allah, except those who are permitted by Allah Himself to intercede on behalf of others.

The Attributes of Allah

The theologians and the philosophers have used their intelligence extensively to know about the attributes of Allah. Utilising their thought process freely, when they passed through the process of deliberation, ignoring the Divine Guidance, they reached the conclusion that God has no attributes i.e. He is "nirgun" (in the Hindu religious terminology). From this conclusion, it is gathered that God is an idle, inert and non-potent entity. According to this concept, the relationship between Allah and His creations, particularly with man, gets severed. Thus, man is completely cut off from his Creator, Allah, not only on the individual level but also on social and collective level. The great injury and ethical and spiritual destruction that man and mankind have faced is because of this reason, since severing the relationship with Allah on the level of intellect is not only foolish but is rather bestial (the relationship of animals with their Creator is not on the level of intellect, but is only on the physical level).

The pure monotheism of Islam after correcting the centuries-old ruined and spoiled viewpoint has established the concept of Allah with all His Attributes in such a way that the severed relationship of man with his Creator has been re-established. Here, Allah with all His attributes and capabilities is with His servants every moment, every place and in every difficulty. Allah is **Supreme and Unique**, that is, He has no associates. He is **Merciful** to man and all His other creations. He gets **Enraged** by evil deeds and gets **Delighted** by good deeds. He is the **Lord** and **Sovereign** of the entire universe and hence He alone is to be obeyed in all aspects of human life. He is **Just** and **Equitable** and hence man should also be just and equitable in his life. He is the **Dispenser of Justice**, i.e. He will dispense justice in the Hereafter to all those people who had been denied justice in this world or who had been given partial justice. He **keeps watch** over man's every big or small deed, action, and activity, i.e. no person would be able to escape from the bad consequence (hell) of his bad deeds in the Hereafter, or would the righteous be denied their reward (of paradise) for their good deeds. He is **Omniscient**, i.e. none can escape in the Hereafter from His hold and from giving full account of his life in the world. He alone is **Worthy of Worship,** i.e. He does not tolerate polytheism and would punish the polytheists. He is **Omnipotent**, i.e. none is associated in his actions, decisions and his authority.

Thus, the Islamic concept of monotheism along with the numerous Attributes of Allah play important and influential role in building up and establishing man's individual and social life on the basis of righteousness, piety, ethics, truth, justice, sacrifice, charity, selflessness, discipline and sense of responsibility.

The Rights of Allah: Demands of Monotheism

In Islam, the duties of man towards His Creator, Allah, have been indivisibly joined with the concept of monotheism. This conscientiousness becomes the basis of live relationship between man and Allah, and the role of Allah in the human life does not become slackened and inactive. In every second and every moment of his active life, he will have a feeling of having a close practical relationship with Allah; that Allah is always near to him;[1] that Allah is keeping a watch on his every deed, thought and activity and that He can see and watch him even in pitch darkness and secluded places; that man is not a free creature, but has to give account of his life before his Creator, Allah, and that in the Hereafter Allah would take account of his every big and small deed, based on which either He would grant him paradise or dump him in the hell.

What is the duty of man towards Allah? It is fulfilling and discharging the rights of Allah. The gist of these rights is as follows:

- Only Allah should be worshipped and served.
- None should ever be worshipped other than Allah. Man should not decide by himself and on the basis of his individual likes and dislikes the ways and means of worship. Rather, the worship should be performed under the instructions of the Divine Guidance (i.e. the Holy Quran) and on the basis of the teachings and instructions of the Holy Prophet, Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh) which are available in the form of *Hadeeth* (Traditions and Sayings of the Prophet), so that it is performed with certainty and discipline and without any

[1] *"It was We Who created man, and We know what dark suggestions his soul makes to him; for We are nearer to him than (his) jugular vein."* (The Quran, 50:16)

ambiguity, and there always remained a role model before us.

- Allah and His Prophet, Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh), should be obeyed in every segment of man's life (the Quran, 3:32, 132; 4:59; 8:1, 20, 46; 24:54, 56; 47:33; 58:13; 64:12, 16, etc.). The objective of this obedience is that every principle, law, dos and don'ts related to human life which are found in the Quran and in the Sayings and the Traditions of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) should be complied with. (These rules about dos and don'ts not only just pertain to the duties of man towards Allah but also pertain to the rights of other human beings and service to humanity.)

Obligation of fulfilment of the rights of Allah does not mean that Allah has some interest in their fulfilment or it benefits Him in any way whatsoever. It has been made very clear in the Holy Quran (112:2) that Allah is Eternal, Supreme and Absolute and is not dependent on anyone and is not in need of anyone's worship. According to one of the Sayings of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), if all the human beings were to worship and obey Allah it would not benefit him nor would it add an iota to His loftiness, honour and dignity, and if every human being were to give up His worship and obedience, it would not decrease an atom in His honour and dignity. In fact, worship and obedience of Allah is entirely in the interest of man and mankind. For man, this viewpoint and faith are that excellent and wonderful aspect of Islamic monotheism that is not found in any other non-Islamic faiths and religions. In it is vested the zenith of human welfare and prosperity.

Effects of Monotheism on Human Life

The inevitable result of the combination of Allah's attributes and His rights with monotheism should be that it should have a profound, effective and conclusive impact on man's practical and collective life; it should not just remain in man's heart, mind, soul, feelings, beliefs and thoughts but should be active in every segment and facet of man's individual and collective life. Some of the numerous and extensive effects that this Islamic concept of monotheism will have on human life are enumerated below:

Character Building: The Islamic concept of pure monotheism adorns man with morality and gives him that spiritual power which does not get weakened or destroyed in any given situation, because they are all supported by Divine Power. The spiritual power and self-confidence that man gets from this Divine Power play very important role in building up man's character.

Human Values: By nature, the human values are part of human character and are ingrained in his personality. But because of various external and internal reasons, they begin to decline and decay. However, the strong relationship with Allah, continuously keep them replenishing.

Accountability: When man tries to commit some sin or crime due to impaired mentality and thoughts (such as avarice, luxury, selfishness, etc.), the fear of law and accountability sometimes stops him from committing any wrongdoing. However, where the border of the reach of society and law ends and when man feels that he need not fear the society and the law, he does not hesitate to commit any heinous crime and sin. This is our day-to-day experience. At this stage, the pure monotheism steps in and stops man from committing any sin or crime by creating the fear of the Hereafter where man has to account for all his deeds before Allah and face severe punishment in the event of committing sins and crimes in this world.

Human Dignity: Most of the times, man forgets his identity and his position in the universe. He forgets about his lofty position amongst all the creations, and then falls so low that on the basis of caste, race, religion, tribe, colour, language, country and state, despises and dishonours other human beings and treats them as untouchables and condemnable. The human history is full of such crimes against humanity. The concept of Islamic pure monotheism has a cure for this social malady. According to the Holy Quran (17:70), Allah has made the progeny of Hazrat Adam lofty and the most honourable. Allah made him so honourable that, according to the Holy Quran (2:34, 7:11, 17:61, 18:50), Allah ordained one of his better creations (which are better in some aspects) to bow before the first man created by Allah, Hazrat Adam. Hence, in the sight of Islam, every human being is honourable.

Human Equality: Although all the constitutions of the countries and States, declarations and charters of national and international bodies and institutions declare and claim all human beings to be equal, but on the practical level millions of human beings have to bear the brunt of inequality, discrimination, exploitation, injustice and persecution. It is only the concept of Islamic monotheism that can remove this inequality and provide a firm foundation for establishment of equality amongst all the human beings. Hence the Holy Quran declares that the division of race, tribes, families, etc. is for identification and not for discrimination and persecution.

> *"O mankind, We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other (not that you may despise each other). Verily, the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well-acquainted (with all things)."* (The Quran, 49:13)

Steadfastness: When man reaches the stage of extreme frustration and begins to seriously consider committing suicide because of the recurring problems, difficulties, challenges and provocative situations while treading the path of Truth, and does not seem to find any solution and support from anywhere, then he gets the support and all the solutions to his problems in the concept of monotheism. The Holy Quran assures that ali the difficulties and problems encountered by man are for test and trial from Allah and those who are steadfast shall reap rich rewards from Allah:

> *"And say not of those who are slain in the way of Allah: "They are dead." Nay, they are living, though you perceive (it) not. Be sure We shall test you with something of fear and hunger, some loss in goods or lives or the fruits (of your toil), but give glad tidings to those who patiently persevere – who say, when afflicted with calamity: "To Allah we belong, and to Him is our return" – they are those on whom (descend) blessings from their Lord, and Mercy, and they are the ones that receive guidance."* (The Quran, 2:154-157)

In another place, the Holy Quran reassures:

"So, verily, with every difficulty, there is relief: Verily, with every difficulty there is relief." (The Quran, 94:5-6)

Conclusion

The aforementioned evaluation and examination clearly prove that the pure and original version of monotheism that Islam presents influences every segment and facet of our life. Be it spiritual segment or material and social, individual or collective segment of human life, Islam portrays pure monotheism as the axis on which the human life is to be built and organized. Pure monotheism is the central point of Islam, it is the axle of Islamic code of conduct and system of life, it is the foundation of Islamic system of life and it is the spirit of Islam.

EFFECTS OF MONOTHEISM ON HUMAN LIFE

Dr. Syed Shahid Ali

Believing Allah to be One

Belief in monotheism means believing in the following:

- There is only One God who has created man and all other creatures and He alone sustains them all. He is Omnipotent, i.e. He is All-Powerful, and all others are dependent on him and cannot do anything without His permission and Will.
- He is not dependent on anyone; rather, everyone is dependent on Him.
- He does not have any offspring, nor is he an offspring of any other.
- He is One and none is a partner to Him. He does not have a beginning nor does He have an end. When there was nothing, He was there; He was always there and will always be there. He alone is the Sustainer of the universe and hence He alone is worthy of our worship; every other creature is His servant.
- He is Omniscient, i.e. He is All-Knowing. He can do anything that He wishes to do; nothing is impossible for Him.
- He is the Most Beneficent and the Most Merciful. He is Equitable and Just.
- Everything has been created by Him.
- None is like Him. He is independent and free of all wants; all others are dependent on Him.
- He is the Master, Lord and Possessor of all powers and none is as powerful as He.

- He is Omniscient. He is present everywhere. Nothing is out of His Control.

- He watches us, hears us and is very near to us. But we cannot see Him.

- He is free from all wants and is never in need of anything. On the other hand, man needs Him.

- He and He alone is worthy of worship. None is like unto Him. He alone gives life and He alone puts us to death.

- Success and failure, honour and disgrace, wealth and indigence, happiness and sorrow, health and sickness, everything is bestowed by Allah alone, and after bestowing any of them He alone has the power to retain it or take it back.

The root cause for all the evils and wrongs in the individual and social life is denial of monotheism, i.e. not believing that there is God, that He is watching us and that we are accountable to Him for all our deeds in this world. There are four kinds of people as far as monotheism is concerned:

1. The first group consists of those who deny the very existence of God.

2. The second group comprises of those who by tongue say that they believe in the existence of God, but do not have any conviction about it in their hearts.

3. The third group consists of those who although declare their belief by tongue and also have the conviction in the existence of God, but do not follow His Guidance and obey His Commands.

4. The fourth group comprises of those people who not only declare their belief in God both by tongue and heart, but also follow and obey His Guidance and Commands. The benefits of monotheism can be reaped only when one believes in One God. We can understand this point from an example. Suppose that we have a piece of land which is full of shrubs, thorny bushes, stones and pebbles and we want to grow wheat in it. If we were to scatter high-quality seeds on the land before making it fit

for cultivation, it would be foolish to expect a good crop and yield of wheat. First of all, we have to clean the land of the unwanted shrubs, stones and peddle and then plough it well to make it cultivable, after which if we sow the seeds we can expect a good crop. Similar is the case with regard to man's heart and mind. If man believes in many gods, apart from the One God, then he cannot reap full benefits of monotheism and it will not have any effects on human life. Belief in monotheism brings moderation and centrality in human life and not chaos and disruption.

Effects of Monotheism on Human Life

According to Islam, man is a unit. All the facets of his life are interrelated with each other. Man's social life affects his economic life, economic life affects the political life, political life affects his social life, social life affects the psychological life, and the psychological life affects the ethical life. It is impossible for man to be right if only one of the aspects of his life is correct and right.

When man believes in monotheism, i.e. in Oneness of God, all the segments and facets of his life get influenced. The effects of monotheism are felt in every facet of man's life, be it social, individual, economical, ethical, political, psychological and other facets.

Man's Mind gets centred on a Single Point

Belief in monotheism makes man single-minded. This way all the capabilities of man get increased. This is quite similar to sun's rays. These rays are usually scattered. But when they are concentrated on a single point with the help of a lens, they get the power to ignite a fire. The point is further explained with another example. Suppose, there is a ship without a captain and another ship with a captain; the captain-less ship either goes astray or gets sunk, while the ship with a captain easily finds its way and reaches its destination. Similarly, monotheism acts as a ship with a captain, which takes a monotheist to his final goal.

Feeling of Oneness with the Entire Creation

There is a Creator and Sustainer of man and all the creations. This concept creates a feeling of oneness in man. He

treats well everything in the world and universe because he believes them to be, like him, created and owned by One Master and Lord. Monotheism makes man broad-minded and generous. Such a person always desires for the others what he desires for himself. He considers everyone equal to him. He believes that every man deserves to be treated with honour and respect and that none should be despised and derided.

Self-Confidence and Self-Respect

One of the meanings of monotheism is to believe that everything is dependent on Allah and that Allah is not dependent on others. This belief creates self-confidence and self-respect in man as he believes that he need not be dependent on creatures like him who are all dependent on Allah, their Creator.

Direct Contact with the Creator

When man firmly believes under the concept of monotheism that Allah is nearer to every person, man and woman, that He is always watching over His creatures, and that He listens and answers directly to every person's call and supplication, then man frees himself from the servitude of others and from the false concept of middleman. He also gets freedom from every kind of superstitious belief and activity.

Fear of Allah

There are two kinds of fear: (1) Fear of Allah; and (2) Fear of non-God.

Fear of non-God means fearing darkness, ghosts, animals, injury, accidents, death, etc. Fear of non-God affects man negatively and makes him weak. On the other hand, fear of Allah will have positive effects on man and it makes him strong and courageous. When man firmly believes that success and failure, happiness and sorrow, wealth and indigence, life and death, dignity and indignity, losses and profits, health and sickness, strength and weakness, are all in the possession of Allah and He alone has the power to give and take them, only then man can become a good person, a courageous soldier, a non-corruptive tradesman, an honest teacher, a kind doctor, a good engineer.

Humility and Kindness

The outcome of belief in an Omnipotent, All-Powerful and Omnipresent Allah is that man begins to consider his own power and strength as weak and temporary, and that Allah has the power to help even the weak. Consequently, while struggling in the way of Allah, man begins to consider the powerful, weak and the weak, the most powerful, and begins to work keeping in view justice and fair play. In this manner, persecution and oppression gets decreased and after some time it gets completely eradicated. Moreover, it also creates humility in man. People usually oppress and persecute others because they think that their power and strength are permanent.

Arrogance

Another aspect of monotheism is the belief that it is Allah that has the power to bestow favours or take away the favours already granted, or bestow no favours at all. Influenced by this belief, man never becomes arrogant because of his wealth, power, strength and progeny; rather he would be thankful for Allah and would try his best to be a well-wisher of others.

Allah is capable of disgracing man in his own home; can imprison him in his own bed and body; can turn his own people against him; and can make his own power and strength his enemy and troublesome: Comprehension of all these prevents man from becoming arrogant.

Under the belief of monotheism, when man prostrates before Allah by placing his forehead on the floor, he practically declares his inferiority and weakness in relation to the Power and Authority of Allah.

Excessive Hopes

Behind all the progress and discoveries is hope; hoping to succeed. Every scientist starts his research and investigation with the hope to succeed, and puts in extra efforts which lead him to success. More hope encourages man to put in more efforts, thus increasing chances of success.

Hope motivates man to work and struggle in life: hope of a good crop motivates the farmer; hope of health for a sick person; hope of profit for a businessman; hope of success for a

student; and so in every activity of human life hope motivates and activates man.

When man believes in monotheism, he also believes in the fact that everything in the world and universe is under the control of Allah, and nothing is out of His control. Allah can do whatever He wants to do and whenever He wants to do. He can change failure into success, happiness into sorrow, and poverty into richness. Therefore, a believer in monotheism never gets despaired and remains always hopeful and optimistic and is protected from pessimism and depression and thus never commits suicide.

The monotheist believes that failures and successes in life are from Allah, and hence successes do not make him arrogant and failures do not make him depressed and distressed; rather in success he profoundly thanks Allah and in failure he adopts patience and constancy.

Consciousness of Allah

The monotheist believes that Allah is Omnipresent, i.e. he sees all and hears everything. This belief protects him from committing evil and wrong deeds and exhorts him to be righteous and do good deeds. Such a person always tries to fulfil his promises as he considers all promises as promises made to Allah; tries to be true to his words and actions; and tries to fulfil the rights of others which results in establishment of mutual trust, social justice and sense of well-wishing in the society.

The belief that Allah is ever watchful over his creatures always keeps man alert.

The belief that Allah is All-Knowing creates a sense which changes man's perception of dealing with fellow human beings and stops him persecuting and oppressing the weak and the indigent, which has been the major reason for the crises being faced by the world and the humanity.

The belief that Allah is Just teaches man to learn about justice and injustice and always try to deal with fellow human beings with justice, and never be selfish. Today, people talk more about peace, but not about justice and fair play, though it is the justice that can establish peace in the world. The belief in the perception of monotheism alone can make man to be just to his fellow human beings, which in turn can establish peace.

The Truth

The person who believes in monotheism becomes a truth-loving person. He always speaks the truth, because his Creator, Allah, likes the truth. A truthful person always speaks the truth even if it goes against his own parents and close relatives and associates. Truth makes a person the man of principles and thus makes the society free from deceit, falsehood and double standards.

Control over Desires

There could be only one relationship between man and his desires; either man will control the desires or the desires will control man. A monotheist believes that all his desires should be subservient to the Will of Allah and that he should always be ready to give up his desires that are against the Will of Allah. When man adopts this attitude with regard to his desires, they will be in his control.

Control over Anger

Similar is the case with regard to anger; either man controls anger or anger will control him. It is part of the belief in monotheism that a monotheist should obey the commands of Allah, and since Allah has commanded to control anger and pardon those who make him angry, he obeys the command and thus learns and practices to control his anger. Describing the good behaviour and characteristics of righteous men, the Holy Quran says:

> *"And, when they are angry, even then forgive."* (The Quran, 42:37)

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) has said in one of his Sayings:

> *"Whoever controls his anger, Allah will stay his punishment on the Day of Judgement."* (Baihaqi)

Uncontrolled anger has caused grievous harm and injury to the society. The crowded prisons, courts and hospitals are witness to this calamity.

Mental Wellbeing

Man's mental attitude affects his behaviour and work. The relationship of the mental attitude with the behaviour is similar to that of a bull with the bullock-cart; wherever the bull goes the cart follows.

Mind is like a garden. When it is not maintained properly, destruction begins to set in. No constructive and useful work can be accomplished with negative thoughts.

Backbiting, blaming others and boasting are some of the evils which cause mental ill-health. Hence, Allah has prohibited all such evils and wrongdoings. Those who believe in monotheism desist from the aforesaid evils thus safeguarding their mental health and also not causing spread of mental pollution. Moreover, Allah likes people to have good thoughts about others and dislikes prying and nosing around, suspicion, and other bad behaviours. When we desist from all the aforesaid bad habits, our mental health is assured.

Definition of Health by World Health Organization

"Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."

Crisis of Faith

The ratio of evil to good is consistently increasing in the present world and a crisis of faith is taking birth in the society.

Father tells his son: "Don't lie," and then when someone calls on him, he tells his son: "Tell him, I am not at home." Teacher advises his student: "Be honest," but he himself does not take the class. The leader says: "Sacrifice for your nation," but he himself sacrifices the nation for his selfish needs. In these situations, there is no role model before the younger generation, which results in the younger generation making entertainment and fun their role models.

Contradiction in words and deeds has become the cause of crisis of faith. However, it is the concept of monotheism that can end this crisis, because a monotheist knows that Allah has commanded:

> *"O you who believe, why do you say that which you do not do? Grievously odious is it in the sight of Allah that you say that which you do not do."* (The Quran, 61:2-3)

Paradise on Earth

Many ideologies came into existence under which many systems and philosophies came into being such as communism, capitalism, socialism, etc. The objective of all these systems is "to establish paradise on earth," i.e. establish a society where full justice is available to the people, and where people are happy and prosperous. But all these systems have failed so much so that an ideological vacuum has been created. What is the reason for this? The reason is that people have distanced themselves from the perception of monotheism, because only by believing in the ideology of monotheism and obeying its principles and teachings the world can be converted into paradise. The more man believes and follows monotheism, the more it ends the evils and the wrongdoings from the world.

One of the objectives of monotheism is to achieve salvation and Allah's good pleasure. Allah's good pleasure can be achieved only if we desist from evils such as lying, falsehood, corrupt practices, injustices, persecution and oppression. If we do that, peace, tranquillity, happiness and prosperity can be established in the society which is akin to establishing paradise on earth.

Sense of Responsibility and Accountability

Belief in monotheism demands that we believe that Allah created man and has divided his life into two parts – the pre-death life and the post-death life – and in between the two He kept death. The pre-death life is temporary and ephemeral and the post-death life is permanent and it is where man is granted rewards or punishment; between the two is death which is a transferring agent.

Monotheism also demands that we should believe that Allah is watching us and that we have to account for our deeds before Him on the Day of Judgement; that He can record man's thoughts from his subconscious, man's words from the sound frequencies and man's deeds from the energy waves.

These beliefs create in man the sense of responsibility and accountability so much so that he becomes the well-wisher of the people, and the one who fulfils the rights of others and the one who desists from persecuting and oppressing others. The Prophet of Allah (pbuh) in one of his Sayings has said that:

> *It is reported by Hazrat Abu Bardah that the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) said: "Man cannot move out on the Day of Judgement until he has not been enquired about four things: About his age that in which tasks he spent it; about his deeds that what deeds he accomplished; about his wealth that from where he earned it and where he spent it; and about his body that in which tasks he wasted it."* (Tirmizi)

Hope and Fear

Another aspect of monotheism is that its believer believes that though Allah is the Most Beneficent and the Most Merciful, he is also very strict in punishing the wrongdoers. This aspect of the belief keeps him in the state of hope and fear. If there were to be only the aspect of beneficence and mercy, man would certainly become impudent and insolent and would not hesitate to commit sins. On the other hand, if there were to be only fear of getting punished and no hope of forgiveness, man would become the victim of hopelessness and despair. Hence, the person who believes in monotheism adopts the middle way of hope and fear. That is, he follows the commands of Allah and His Prophet as far as possible and tries to be righteous, but would never become complacent and think that because of his righteous deeds he is sure to get salvation and good pleasure of Allah, but would have a lingering fear that, for some reason or the other, Allah might reject his deeds. However, simultaneously he hopes that Allah, out of His Mercy, would accept his righteous deeds and grant him salvation and His good pleasure. The following feelings expressed by Hazrat Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) explains this point more clearly. Once he said:

> "If a voice makes an announcement from the heavens that out of all humanity, only one person is destined for hell, I would think that most likely I would be that person; and if the voice announces from the heavens that out of all humanity, only one person is destined for paradise, I would think that most likely I would be that person."

Ever Cautious

The monotheist believes that Allah is his Master and Lord and that he is His servant and slave, and thus in his life he adopts complete servitude of Allah. Hence, he always remains in contact with Allah. Islam is not a part-time enterprise. It encompasses man's entire life. As such, the person who believes in Islam is always cautious and he never allows himself to go against the teachings and commands of Islam.

Reformation of Humanity

Man can be reformed in two ways: from inside to outside, and from outside to inside.

The first way is to stop man from committing wrongs and evil acts by creating fear in him of the power of law and punishment. The second way is to create within man's heart and mind a firm belief in the existence of Allah and His Attributes of Omniscience and Omnipotence (All-Knowing and All-Powerful) and that, after death, man has to give an account of his deeds before Allah, and thus stop him from committing evil deeds. Islam adopts the second way, because we find in the society very powerful and influential persons who do not fear man-made laws and other restrictions. Only the belief in the concept of monotheism can keep them on the right path. The concept of monotheism creates civil sense in the people. Therefore, the people who believe in monotheism do not break the law of the land, nor would they create chaos and destruction in the society. On the individual level, a monotheist would be a good husband, good wife, good parent, good manager, good leader, good businessman, good soldier, good teacher, good doctor, good engineer and a good person in every field of life.